

*On the Immediate Repayments of Good and Evil in Return  
for a Vow to Copy the Dai hannya-kyō and for the Use  
of the Temple Property<sup>1</sup>*

Ōtomo no muraji Oshikatsu 大伴連忍勝<sup>2</sup> came from the village of Omuna, Chisagata district, Shinano province 信濃國小縣郡嬬里.<sup>3</sup> The Ōtomo-no muraji family got together and built a hall in the village to serve as the family temple.<sup>4</sup> Because Oshikatsu wanted to copy the *Dai hannya-kyō* 大般若經,<sup>5</sup> he made a vow and collected donations. Having shaved his head and face, put on a surplice, and received the precepts, he lived in the temple, practicing the path.

In the third month in the spring of the first year of the tiger, the fifth year of the Hōki era,<sup>6</sup> he was accused of a crime and beaten to death by the patrons<sup>7</sup> of the temple. (The patrons were of the same family<sup>8</sup> as Oshikatsu.) This family conferred and said, "Since murder is involved, we will wait for a judgment." Accordingly they did not cremate him on the spot but made a tomb and arranged the corpse for a temporary burial. After five days, however, he was restored to life, and told this story to his family:

"Five messengers accompanied me and made me hurry along. Ahead of us there was a very steep slope. Having reached the top of the slope, I stopped to look around and saw three broad paths. The first was flat and wide, the second covered with grass, and the third blocked with thick bushes. In the center of the three-forked road<sup>9</sup> a king was seated, to whom the messengers spoke, saying, 'We have brought him.' Pointing to the flat path, he said to them, 'Take him this way.' Surrounding me, the king's messengers went on that path.

"At the end of the way, there was a big kettle. The steam rose from it like a sheet of flame, and the water boiled with the thunderous

1. Cf. *Konjaku monogatari-shū* (XIV, 30).

2. Unknown. For the Ōtomo no muraji family, see I.5, n. 2.

3. Present Ueda-shi, Nagano-ken 長野縣 上田市.

4. 氏寺 *uji-dera*; see Chap. I(1)d.

5. *Maka hannya haramita-kyō* (*Taishō*, VIII, No. 223) or *Dai hannya haramita-kyō*, 600 vols. (*Taishō*, V, VI, VII, No. 220).

6. 774, in the reign of Emperor Kōnin.

7. 檀越 *taniochi*.

8. 氏 *uji*; see Chap. I(1)d, n. 112.

9. See III.33, n. 7.

roar of breaking waves. But when they threw me into it alive, the kettle turned cold and broke into four pieces.

"Three monks came out then, and asked me, 'What good have you done?' I answered, 'I haven't practiced any good, but I made a vow once to copy six hundred volumes of the *Dai hannya-kyō*, although I haven't fulfilled it yet.' Then they took out three iron tablets<sup>10</sup> for checking and said to me, 'It is true that you made a vow and renounced the world to practice the way. In spite of those good deeds you brought destruction on yourself by using property belonging to the temple. Now, go back to fulfill the vow and atone for the loss of the temple property.' Suddenly released, I came back by the three-forked broad way, coming down the slope, and I realized at once I had been restored to life. I incurred this karmic retribution because of the effort shown in making the vow and because of my use of temple property, and hell has nothing to be blamed for."

This is what the *Dai hannya-kyō*<sup>11</sup> means when it says: "One *mon*, if multiplied for twenty days, will make 1,740,003,968 *mon*."<sup>12</sup> Therefore, don't steal or use even one *mon*."

*On Being Born as a Monkey for Keeping Men from  
Seeking the Way<sup>1</sup>*

On the mountain named Mikamu-no-take, in Yasu district, Ōmi province 近江國野州郡御上嶺,<sup>2</sup> there was a shrine called the abode of Taga no Ōkami 鵜我大神.<sup>3</sup> It was endowed with six families' holdings as its private property. Near the shrine there was a temple.

During the Hōki era,<sup>4</sup> in the reign of Emperor Shirakabe, the Venerable Eshō 恵勝<sup>5</sup> of Daian-ji was staying at the temple for a

10. See III.22, n. 8.

11. Unlocated.

12. This calculation does not seem to be correct since it amounts to 524,288 on the twentieth day, and 536,870,912 on the thirtieth day, which is the reading in the Maeda manuscript.

1. Cf. *Fusō ryakki* (Shō II, Kōnin), *Genkō shakusho* (IX).

2. Or Mikami-yama 三上山, Ōmi Fuji 近江富士, located in present Yasu-chō, Yasu-gun, Shiga-ken.

3. Taga Shrine located in present Taga-chō, Inukami-gun, Shiga-ken 滋賀縣犬上郡多賀町, although Izanagi and Izanami are enshrined now.

4. (770-780).

5. Unknown.